TL 4993

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

Statement by Ambassador Jamsheed Marker

Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for East Timor

at the meeting of the All-inclusive Intra-East Timorese Dialogue

(AIETD)

Krumbach Castle, Austria

20 October 1997

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be with you today for the opening of the third meeting of the All-inclusive Intra-East Timorese Dialogue (AIETD). On behalf of the Secretary-General, I welcome you all to this gathering, the third of its kind to be facilitated by the United Nations. The Secretary-General has asked me to convey to all of you his warm greetings and best wishes for a fruitful and successful outcome of your important deliberations.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Austria, which in addition to hosting the AIETD for the third time, is also making a financial contribution to meet the cost of organizing the meeting. All of us are most appreciative of the excellent facilities which have been provided to us by our generous hosts. I would also like to express my warm thanks to all the other Governments that have voluntarily extended financial assistance that has ensured the successful convening of this meeting.

As you are all aware, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has committed himself to revitalizing his good offices on the question of East Timor. Since my appointment in February 1997, I have been assisting the Secretary-General in this effort, and can confidently say that with the cooperation of the Governments of Indonesia and Portugal as well as East Timorese of all shades of political persuasion, we have succeeded in orienting the tripartite discussions aimed at finding a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor on a more focused and sustained course. I would

like to assure you that the Secretary-General and myself will continue to exert our best efforts, and given the requisite political will, I see no reason why we cannot make significant progress in the negotiating process.

In the course of the last several months, I have had the opportunity to meet with many of you, which has enabled me to greatly appreciate the quest for peace, justice and development that prevails among all East Timorese. It has also given me the occasion to closely observe the keen desire shared by many East Timorese to contribute their part towards the resolution of the problem of your homeland. In this respect, I am well aware of the efforts made by many of you in this room today, individually or through the AIETD and other avenues. I am also cognizant of the remarkable civility and mutual understanding that characterized the previous two meetings of the AIETD. I am confident that this experience has given you a good appreciation of what possibilities exist for cooperating among yourselves in certain common endeavours while setting aside the differences of opinion that divide you. I should like to congratulate you for this exemplary spirit of accommodation and political maturity that you have demonstrated, and urge you to maintain the same atmosphere at this and any future meetings.

You are all aware that the terms of reference of the AIETD, adopted by the fifth round of Ministerial talks held in January 1995, remain valid. In particular, I should like to remind you that the dialogue should not address the political status of East Timor and does not constitute a parallel negotiating track

or a substitute for the tripartite talks under the auspices of the Secretary-General. It is a complementary process that provides a unique forum for the East Timorese to make practical contributions to the search for a solution.

As you may recall, the eighth round of the Ministerial talks, held in June 1996, considered the proposals that emerged from the AIETD and agreed to carry out further discussions on those relating to the establishment of an East Timorese cultural centre in Dili and the possibility of Portuguese assistance to human resources development in East Timor. I am pleased to inform you that the Senior Officials' Meetings which I have chaired since August of this year have discussed these proposals at some length. I am also pleased to say that both Governments are fully supportive of these initiatives but wish to obtain your additional views on some aspects of their practical implementation. I have thus been asked to convey to you the decision of the tripartite talks to seek the following elaboration from the AIETD.

With regard to the cultural centre:

1. *Aims and purposes*: The tripartite talks concluded that in general, the objective of establishing the centre should be the preservation and promotion of the tradition, customs, culture and creativity of the East Timorese people and that the centre would be expected to work in cooperation with existing relevant bodies and agencies as appropriate. On this basis, the AIETD is now asked to further elaborate the aims and purposes of the centre.

2. *Organizational arrangement*: The AIETD is requested to propose an institutional framework for the centre. In doing so, the AIETD could consider, among other things, the creation of a small and fully accountable Board of Directors, which would include an Executive Director to be in charge of the day-to-day operation of the centre.

3. *Financing and mechanisms for the channeling of funds*: The tripartite talks agreed that the centre should be financed through contributions from Indonesia, Portugal and other interested Governments, as well as from intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations. The UN will explore areas in which its relevant specialized agencies could assist, including in the channeling of resources. The participants of the AIETD, taking into account the practice in international donor-recipient relations, are requested to propose arrangements designed to enable the centre to propose projects, attract funds and organize their disbursement.

4. *Portuguese language and culture*: The Burg Schlaining Declaration of 1996 had indicated that the research work of the cultural centre ought to include the Portuguese language. The AIETD is also asked to provide some elaboration on this point.

With respect to Portuguese assistance to human resources development in East Timor,

I have been asked to convey to you the Government of Portugal's readiness to provide assistance for the purpose. The modalities of how this could be achieved will be worked out in due course.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As you can see, the proposals of the AIETD are being given due attention by the two Governments. It is clear that they wish to entrust the main responsibility for the implementation of these ideas to the East Timorese. It is important, therefore, for this forum to respond to these requests of the tripartite talks and provide its best elaboration on the issues indicated.

The United Nations is here to assist and facilitate your deliberations. As an observer, Mr. Tamrat Samuel will closely follow your discussions and report to Headquarters.

I wish you success in your work. Thank you.